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Bangalore Mirror

Happy New Year 2025 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

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LOOKING AHEAD AT 2025

What we can expect in terms of infra work, our roads, Metro, flyovers, suburban rail, films and a wishlist for this year PAGES 4-7

WATCHFUL EYES

Police help city party without fear — personnel deployed on the ground, in observation towers and at safety islands PAGE 2

PICS: KAUSHIK JN

Report shows Bengaluru has extracted 100% of its ground water in 2024, in urban parts almost 200% of groundwater has been extracted, leaving us with no groundwater for future use

PEER INTO THE ABYSS

Majority of water extracted is used for irrigation

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Bengaluru has extracted 100% of its ground water in 2024, with 30 assessment units in the rural and urban districts of Bengaluru categorised as overexploited, as per the National Compilation on Dynamic Ground Water Resources of India, 2024 report.

The analysis has been presented by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB).

The assessment was conducted on 10 units in Bengaluru rural district – one in Nelamangala, two in Devanahalli, three in Hoskote, and four in Doddaballapura – and 20 units in the urban district – one in Bengaluru East, two in Bengaluru South, three in Yelahanka, four in Bengaluru City, five in Anekal and six in Bengaluru North.

The report highlights that while the current stage of groundwater

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

"In Karnataka, while the total annual groundwater extraction is less than 70% of the available resources, overall extraction has increased from 66.26 % in 2023 to 68.44 % in 2024

— CGWB report

Drug under the rug

State medical corporation assigned blacklisted firm to supply drugs worth Rs 97 lakh: CAG

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A report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India submitted to the State Assembly recently has revealed that the Karnataka State Medical Supplies Corporation Limited (KSMSCL) engaged a blacklisted firm to supply drugs worth Rs 97 lakh.

Whether it was for supplying sub-standard sterile surgical gloves in August 2023 or for supplying seven medicines with wrong labels to government hospitals, KSMCL is no stranger to controversies.

But as per the CAG report, Clause 28 of the tender says that if two or more drugs of a firm failed in quality tests, the firm was to be blacklisted for subsequent five years from participating in any departmental tenders. That didn't stop the KSMSCL to employ one of the eight firms that it had blacklisted itself during the audit period. SM Pharmaceuticals was blacklisted for the period July 31, 2020 to July 30, 2025. The CAG audit observed that the firm had supplied drugs worth Rs 97 lakh during the period August 2020 to November 2020 indicating the absence of a stringent monitoring mechanism in the KSMSCL.

"Further, as per the tender conditions, if any manufacturing unit does not meet the required manufacturing standards during

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Art & tech fest

The National Education Society of Karnataka presents "NES Supernova 2.0". This two-day free event will showcase 350+ Science & Humanities models, ISRO exhibits, robots & drones, cultural programs, numismatics displays. The event will also have esports tournaments, AR/VR experiences, games, digital art & rocket making competition, liquid nitrogen show and much more. **Where: National College, Basavanagudi; When: January 3 and 4**

02 Art exhibition

Gallery Sumukha presents 'Me, Amma, We' by Devu Nenmara and Unnikrishnan C.
Where: Gallery Sumukha, BTS Depot Road, Wilson Garden When: Until January 11, 2025, 10:30 am to 6 pm

03 Insightful conversation

Discuss science, ideas, and different dimensions of overconfidence, with 'Beyond Doubt' by Vivek Nityananda as he explores the impact of overconfidence on modern society. He will be in conversation with Anupama Bijur. Beyond Doubt dissects the paradox of overconfidence and how it motivates leaders.
Where: Library, Bangalore International Centre, Domlur; When: January 4, 6:30 pm

04 Sushi rolling party

Whether you`re a sushi lover or a complete beginner, this hands-on workshop is the perfect opportunity to learn the art of sushi making, enjoy great food, and have a fantastic time with friends and family. All ingredients and tools are provided, so come ready to roll!
Where: SmallWorld, Koramangala; When: From January 4

05 Pottery session

Hand built pottery workshop: In hand built pottery session we will be learning about basics of clay, material preparation & handling, hand building tools and techniques, and finally create a handcrafted piece of artefact. **Where: StoryZone, HSR Layout; When: Until January 12**

Nadoja Dr Rudresh awarded PhD degree

Renowned homeopathy expert and Nadoja Dr BT Rudresh has been conferred a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) by an autonomous university in Pune. His research dissertation titled "The Role of Homeopathy in Addressing Female Infertility" earned him the doctorate from Dr DY Patil Vidyapeeth, Pune. A distinguished MD in homeopathy, Dr Rudresh has been practicing for over four decades and has successfully treated more than 3,000 infertile couples. Previously, he has been honoured with a Doctor of Letters (D.Litt) from Kuvempu University and the prestigious Nadoja award from Kannada University, Hampi, in recognition of his contributions to the field. **— BMB**

Under watchful eyes, city can party all night long

Boots on the ground, observation towers, CCTVs & control rooms, women safety islands and more for city's NYE do

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KAUSHIK JN

A crowd of revellers turned out at MG Road, Brigade Road and surrounding areas; police intensified checks in these areas

Vibrant lights, music, and a festive atmosphere, pervaded MG Road as many gathered here to bid adieu to 2024. The police were on their toes, preparing for a crowd of nearly two lakh people.

In the Central Division, covering Brigade Road, MG Road, and surrounding areas, barricades were put up and people would have to move only on footpaths. Women Safety Islands were established at strategic points, offering assistance to women. Observation towers with binoculars were set up for surveillance, and 817 personnel were deployed to monitor public safety.

A total of 2,572 police officers and staff including 5 DCP, 18 ACP, 41 police inspectors were deployed. Additionally, women officers and personnel were deployed at the Women Safety Islands. Police kiosks were set up in strategic areas to offer essential services, such as reporting missing children, theft complaints, or handling emergency situations.

Additional security was provided at major malls and other crowded areas, with 11,830 police personnel, including 93 KSRP and CAR platoons, overseeing the festivities. Police personnel were deployed in front of 108 pubs and restaurants in the southern section.

A major surveillance initiative was established with the installation of 7,500 CCTV cameras across the city. The cameras covered high-traffic areas, major celebration hubs, and public gathering spots. A control room was also set up to monitor the footage and alert police officials if need be.

Masks off, whistling banned

Authorities had stopped use of full-face masks and imposed a ban on whistling in public places. The decision comes after incidents in previous years where the excessive use of whistles disrupted public announcements and emergency warnings. Full-face masks were also flagged as a security risk, as they could potentially conceal identities during anti-social activities. Police Commissioner B Dayananda urged revelers to comply with the new restrictions to prevent chaos and maintain public safety.

Drunk driver causes much chaos

Ahead of the New Year Eve celebrations, a drunk driver caused a traffic disruption at the 12th Main Junction, 100 Feet Road, Diranagar, around 6.30 pm. The driver, identified as Mahashaya, lost control of his vehicle and crashed onto a road divider. In his drunken state, he obstructed traffic and created chaos, even attacking bystanders who attempted to intervene.

The police arrived promptly, conducted a breathalyzer test, and cleared the vehicle from the divider. Fortunately, no injuries were reported.

To deter driving under the influence, multiple checkpoints have been set up strategically.

Check, check

Police officials checked bags of revellers and were seizing cigarettes, colour horns and any other items they deemed as disturbing. They were also cautioning people about drunk driving and traffic safety measures.

Party, but say no to drugs: Narcotics worth ₹2.5 crore seized

Ahead of New Year's Eve, CCB's anti-narcotics squad cracked down on several drug rackets, including one involving a tattoo artist-turned-peddler. A stash of high-value narcotics worth Rs.2.5 crore, allegedly intended to fuel New Year revelry, was uncovered. Almost 33 kg of ganja worth Rs.13.3 lakh and MDMA worth Rs.10 lakh was seized.

"We are conducting awareness programmes. Around the time of New Year celebrations, illegal drug trade spikes across Bengaluru. Over the past two months, police and CCB officials have intensified operations, seizing significant quantities of narcotics," Commissioner of Police B Dayanada said during a weekly press conference.

The squad arrested a tattoo artist stockpiling drugs for the celebrations. Acting on a tip-off, officers raided an apartment in Chokkanahalli on December 27, seizing illegal substances worth Rs.2.5 crore. The arrest led to the seizure of 3.55 kg of hydroganja, 16.65 kg Ganja, 40 LSD strips, 130 gm Charas, 2.3g MDMA crystals. Further investigation exposed a supply chain involving accomplices from Goa and connections to Thailand, Himachal Pradesh, and Telangana for sourcing LSD strips, charas, and cannabis.

Set up audio announcement at bus stops

High Court asks State govt to make public spaces accessible to disabled

The High Court has instructed the State government to implement Audio Announcement System (AAS) facilities within two years at major bus-stops and points across all districts and taluks to assist visually impaired and differently-abled individuals, with plans for future expansion. The court specified that the AAS should assist differently-abled persons with bus entry and exit, utilising advanced technology. Local authorities must allocate an adequate budget for the continuous operation of this scheme.

The court has instructed both KSRTC and BMTC to maintain their existing AAS systems and effectively implement their proposed schemes for differently-abled individuals. Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice KV Aravind, forming a Division Bench, issued these directives whilst resolving a PIL petition filed by N Shreyas, a visually-challenged lawyer from Bengaluru.

"A visually impaired person, unless properly guided, would find it difficult to recognise the buses, time, and place of embarkation to the buses and the bus stop where he would be intending to get down. A loud speaker system with announcements is of help to a visually impaired or blind person. In withdrawing such a facility, the respondent authorities had negated the statutory mandate and the laudable ideals of equality and social justice to the class of differently abled persons," the bench said.

Stay on arrest warrant against Uthappa

The High Court on Tuesday issued a temporary stay on an arrest warrant against former cricketer Robin Uthappa regarding an alleged Provident Fund (PF) fraud case.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj, presiding over a Vacation Bench, provided interim protection to Uthappa whilst staying the arrest warrant and associated proceedings against him. The ruling followed Uthappa's petition to the Court requesting the dismissal of recovery notices and the arrest warrant issued in the matter. The case involves Centaurus Lifestyle Brands, a private company where Uthappa held the position of director from 2018 to 2020.

Caste abuse: Action stayed against IIMB faculty

The HC has halted proceedings against officials and faculty members of the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) following a notice from the Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement (DCRE) Cell. The proceedings originated from Dr Gopal Das's complaint alleging discrimination based on caste. Justice Hemant Chandanagoudar determined that whilst DCRE can prosecute fraudulent caste certificate cases, it lacks authority to probe harassment claims.

- Rachana Ramesh

Illegal firecracker den raided

Illegally stored firecrackers worth 2 lakh were seized from a shop in Mariyappanapalya, under the jurisdiction of Agrahara Police Station after a raid by the Women Protection Wing of the Central Crime Branch (CCB).

According to the information received, the firecrackers were being sold without the necessary licences or government permissions, posing risk to public safety. The shop, located on the ground floor of a building behind Binny Mill Canteen, was found storing different types of firecracker boxes in hazardous conditions, with no precautionary measures in place. **-BMB**

Brakes on Royal Enfield thief's run

A man was arrested for stealing a Royal Enfield Classic-350 motorcycle, along with six other Royal Enfield two-wheelers, valued at 15 lakh. The theft was reported by a resident of Krishnamurthy Layout under Suddagunte Palya Police Station on November 23, 2024. His bike, parked outside his house on November 22, was missing the next day.

During the investigation, police gathered leads from various sources and arrested the accused, identified as a resident of Krishnamurthy Layout, Tavarekere, on December 9. Upon interrogation, the accused confessed to stealing the Royal Enfield motorcycle and six others in the area. **-BMB**

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BDA gets green signal for PRR project loan

BDA secures ₹27,000 crore loan from HUDCO for Bengaluru Business Corridor; Long-delayed project set to receive clearance within two months, say officials

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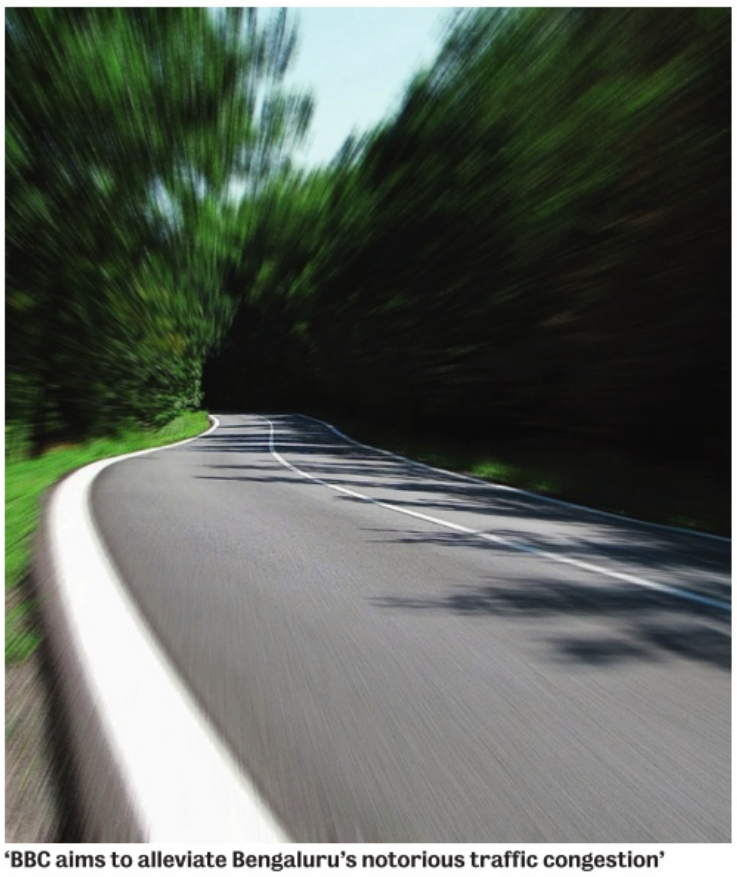
The Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) has received approval from the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) for a Rs 27,000 crore loan to construct the ambitious Bengaluru Business Corridor (BBC). An agreement formalising the loan arrangement is expected to be signed shortly between the two entities.

The BBC project requires the acquisition of approximately 2,560 acres of land, and compensation to farmers will be determined under the BDA Act and the Land Acquisition Compensation Act. This long-delayed project, previously known as the Peripheral Ring Road (PRR), is now set to commence within two months, according to BDA sources.

The loan includes Rs.21,000 crore for land acquisition and Rs.6,000 crore for road construction. The proposed corridor will feature a 100-meter-wide road, and land acquisition efforts have been aligned with this plan. The BDA senior officials revealed that HUDCO's loan will provide the much-needed financial impetus for the project.

> **"To ensure smooth loan repayment through toll collection, a significant portion of the land will be designated for commercial use** – Official

A BDA official said, "After a delay of two decades, the BBC project is now set to receive clearance by January or February. In accordance with the Land Acquisition Act and Resettlement and Rehabilitation Act, compensation will be provided to farmers who relinquish their land."



'BBC aims to alleviate Bengaluru's notorious traffic congestion'

Commercial use along corridor

The BBC aims to alleviate Bengaluru's notorious traffic congestion. It will connect Tumakuru Road and Hosur Road through a 100-meter-wide, 73 km road, passing through 77 villages. It will also connect key areas such as Hesaraghatta, Doddaballapur, Chikkaballapur, Whitefield, and Hosur.

The land on both sides of the BBC will be earmarked for commercial purposes. A six-lane road, 50 meters wide, will run along the corridor, while the remaining land will be utilised for commercial developments. According to a senior official from the BDA, discussions will be held with landowners to determine appropriate compensation, and the land acquisition process will be expedited. "To ensure smooth loan repayment through toll collection, a significant portion of the land will be designated for commercial use," said an official.

Timeline & financing plan

The project is expected to be completed within three years. The state government has agreed to bear the interest on the loan for the first four years, within which the BDA is required to repay the loan. If the repayment period extends beyond four years, the BDA will be responsible for both the principal and remaining interest.

Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway gears up for partial or full opening in state

Bengaluru's first expressway connecting to Chennai is likely to open this year, either partially or fully, as vehicles are already plying on the completed stretch. As of now, the 72-km segment of the Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway within Karnataka is now ready. Although nearing completion for some time, the project faced delays at Jinnagara due to a religious structure. Local residents resisted relocating the Guddamma Temple situated on a hillock but as of last month, NHAI successfully completed a 500-meter stretch of the road by relocating the temple.

The new section is now integrated with the 82-km operational Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR) connecting Dabaspet and Hoskote. When asked about its usage, an NHAI official stated, "Work is complete, but a decision on opening it for motorists is pending." The Karnataka stretch includes entry and exit points at Malur, Bangarpet, and Bethamangala, enabling drivers to traverse the stretch in approximately 40 minutes.

The four-lane expressway will dramatically reduce travel time between Bengaluru and Chennai from over six hours to just three. With a speed limit of 120 km/h, it will shorten the Bengaluru-Chennai distance by 80 km. At Kolathur, residents have requested an underpass and objected to ramp construction. To this, an NHAI official commented, "Discussions are ongoing to provide road infrastructure at Kolathur. These works will be part of a separate project." A detailed project report for flyover has been submitted to headquarters for approval.

Cables may be replaced in Peenya Flyover this year

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The repair work on the Peenya Flyover along Tumakuru Road, a crucial artery connecting over 20 districts in Karnataka, remains incomplete even after three years since it began. However, officials claim that the entire work may be completed in 2025.

In the first phase, 240 new cables—two per pillar across 120 pillars—were installed to strengthen the flyover. Subsequently, work commenced on replacing 1,200 cables across the same stretch. However, only 600 cables have been replaced so far, despite several months of effort.

Stretching 5 km from Goraguntepalya to the Parle-G factory, the Peenya flyover lies within Asia's largest industrial area. Initially, heavy vehicles were banned from using the flyover, with light vehicles allowed during repair work. Cement concrete layering, which is needed after cable installation, has necessitated restrictions on heavy vehicle movement every Friday. Until the remaining cables are replaced, the restriction on lorries and heavy vehicles will continue every Friday, creating challenges for transporters in the region. Sources said at least nine more months are required to fully replace the 1,200 cables.

Plenty of water now, but mindful use is key: Officials

At the start of 2024, there were significant water concerns as reservoirs were rapidly depleting, and Bengaluru was grappling with one of its worst water crisis, with discussions of water rationing looming. However, abundant rainfall helped Bengaluru receive its annual rainfall quota, with city-reliant reservoirs now nearly full, offering hope that there will be no water shortage in the first half of the year. However, officials note that even though there could be no water shortage, yet Bengalureans should continue to minimise the wastage and strictly follow rainwater harvesting practices.

According to Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre data, as of December 22, the KRS reservoir is at its full capacity of 49.45 TMC (124 feet). The inflow and outflow both stand at an average of 3,000 cusecs. The monsoon surge filled the KRS to capacity on July 24. Since then, water has been released for irrigation, drinking purposes, and sharing with Tamil Nadu. Subsequent strong rains replenished the reservoir, keeping it full for five consecutive months. Since June 1, an estimated 186 TMC of water has been released from the reservoir.

According to an official, the current water levels at KRS are 1.5 times higher in comparison to last year, when it held only 20 TMC at this time. "Experts predict no water shortages for Bengaluru during the upcoming summer. The current water levels in Karnataka's reservoirs highlight a stable water supply across the state," an official said. **— Sridhar Vivan**

BBMP in plans to have its own medical college

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike is now mulling establishing a medical college in the city under its jurisdiction, responsible for the city's public health system. "A feasibility report for the medical college was obtained by BBMP a year ago. Following approval for its establishment, the project report is now being prepared. We have prepared a plan for improving the city's health system, including modernising hospitals and infrastructure, at a cost of Rs 350 crore. A proposal for funding under the "Band Bengaluru" scheme has already been submitted to the government," an official said.

Sources said that earlier, BBMP had considered establishing the medical college in MC Layout, Govindarajanagar. However, the establishment will depend on resolving a location dispute at this land. "BBMP currently manages six referral hospitals, 26 maternity hospitals, 135 primary health centres, one public hospital, and 220 clinics. With establishment of a medical college, BBMP will be able to offer better services." **—Sridhar Vivan**

Living in harmony with streeties: Norms to be implemented

Apartment complexes, institutions take note: Deadline to implement guidelines issued in July extended to Jan 15

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This year may see the implementation of BBMP Community Animals Guidelines as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had issued a directive for all Residential Welfare Associations (RWAs), Apartment Owners Associations (AOAs), and public and private institutions earlier. Now, the deadline is to implement these guidelines by January 15, 2025.

An official said, "The guidelines, which were issued in July 2024, provide a simplified version of the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) guidelines, outlining responsibilities for RWAs, AOAs, and institutions in line with the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023, and relevant High Court and Supreme Court orders."

According to the official, key aspects covered in the guidelines include the management of pet animals, designation of feeding spots for community dogs, education on animal laws and rights, and protocols for handling dog bites. "While some associations and institutions have taken proactive steps to implement the guidelines, many are still lagging behind. A recent High Court ruling emphasizing stricter pet regulations and dog bite management underlines the urgency of compliance with these guidelines," he said.

Community animal guidelines were issued in July 2024

"While some associations have taken proactive steps to implement the guidelines, many are still lagging behind. The recent HC ruling stresses on need for regulation –BBMP official

Despite the rollout of the guidelines, BBMP has noted ongoing issues such as the relocation of community dogs and cats, banning of pets, harassment of animal feeders, false dog bite reports, and animal cruelty cases. In response, BBMP has directed all public and private entities, including offices, tech parks, schools, colleges, parks, shopping malls, and residential associations, to comply with the community animal guidelines by the set deadline. An official added, "BBMP's Animal Husbandry Department will conduct surprise audits post-January 15, 2025, to assess compliance, and legal action will be taken against entities failing to implement the guidelines. Zonal Animal Husbandry Departments have also been instructed to act swiftly on cases involving the relocation or harassment of animal caretakers," he said.

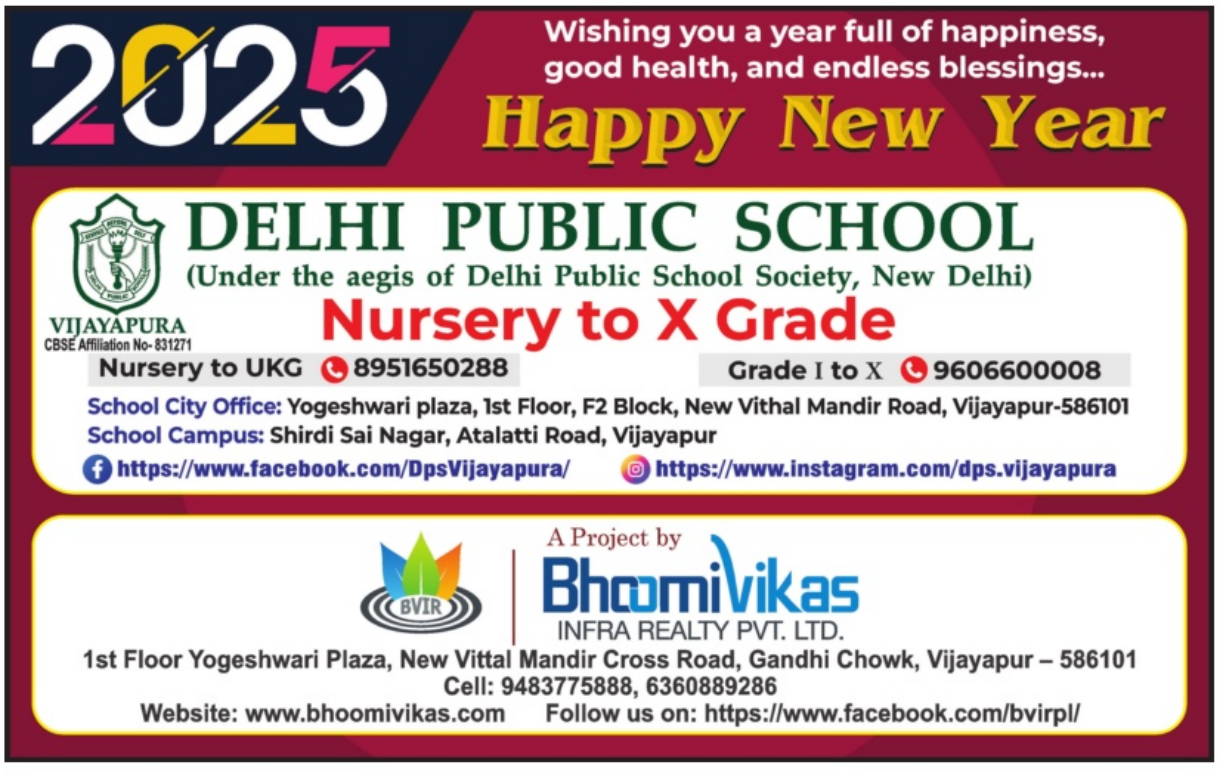
At long last, US Consulate in B'luru this year?

Will 2025 see the establishment of the US consulate in Bengaluru? Recently, US Ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti said the US is moving forward with its plan to open a consulate in Bengaluru in 2025. He said the US government already had the Foreign Commercial Service in Bengaluru and were committed to opening the consulate there.

This move would eliminate the need for residents to travel to Hyderabad or Chennai for visa-related services, despite Bengaluru contributing to around 40% of the country's software industry. A section of Bengalureans are eagerly waiting for the consulate. "The establishment of a US Consulate in Bengaluru will mark a significant step in strengthening US-India relations, and will open up avenues for collaboration and development. With a rapidly growing economy and a thriving startup ecosystem, Bengaluru has become one of the most important cities for global business," said an official.

Sources said that the consulate will serve as a vital bridge for American companies looking to expand into the southern Indian market, providing them with the necessary resources, information, and support.

In addition, the consulate will be instrumental in enhancing people-to-people ties. Bengaluru is home to a large and vibrant community of professionals, students, and researchers from the United States. With improved consular services, American citizens residing in the city will have easier access to consular support, and students will benefit from better guidance on educational opportunities, visa processing, and other services. **–Sridhar Vivan**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KSRTC's vision: Seamless, cashless, paperless travel experience

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As we step into 2025, the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has ushered in a new era in public transport with its ambitious upgrade to the ticketing system. After two decades of relying on traditional Electronic Ticketing Machines (ETMs), KSRTC has introduced a fleet of 10,245 new Smart ETMs across all depots and buses.

The new Android-based Smart ETMs come equipped with touchscreens, wireless communication capabilities, and faster processing systems. These machines allow passengers to pay for tickets through a variety of digital payment methods, including RFID cards, QR codes via UPI, debit and credit cards, and mobile wallets.

According to KSRTC officials, the digital shift has already delivered impressive results. "Daily transactions range between Rs 30,000 to 40,000, generating a revenue of Rs 40-50 lakh through Dynamic QR-based payments alone. This approach now contributes to 20-30% of the total revenue generated by the ETM system," said an official. In a major milestone, on December 23, KSRTC recorded its highest number of UPI transactions to date.

The new Smart ETMs integrate features like digital pass validation, QR code validation, and GPS tracking.

KSRTC's Vision for 2025

Building on the success of its Smart ETMs, KSRTC is planning a series of groundbreaking innovations for 2025, aimed at further enhancing passenger convenience and operational efficiency. These upgrades are designed to make travel more seamless, cashless, and paperless while utilising cutting-edge technology .

KSRTC's 2025 roadmap introduces a shift to cashless and contactless payments, allowing passengers to pay using debit/credit cards or prerecharged wallet cards. The introduction of QR ticketing will enable passengers to board buses with digital tickets directly stored on their smartphones, eliminating the need for paper tickets, aligning with the corporation's environmental goals.

KSRTC officials explained that passengers will also receive their tickets through WhatsApp. KSRTC is also planning to integrate its ETM application with the AWATAR reservation system, enabling real-time bus bookings based on occupancy data from ETM machines at intermediate stops. In addition, digital passes will be made available via WhatsApp or QR codes.

The new system will also introduce smart card-based passes and contactless cards.

Waiting for the Yellow Line to get on track

BMRCL says new line from RV Road Station to Bommasandra will start operations by end of January

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As we ring in the new year, many Bengalureans travelling towards Electronics City are eagerly waiting for the commercial operation of Yellow line that connects RV road station to Bommasandra. This 18.82-km railway line will have 18 stations and can help travellers beat the traffic. The service was supposed to start in 2024, but insufficient availability of trains deferred commercial operations. Earlier, the BMRCL had said that it will launch commercial operations by January-end. The big question is whether the officials will stick to the pre-announced date or will there be any further delay?

A trial run was conducted on the entire Yellow Line in June 2024

Prototype from China to arrive by Jan 10

A prototype train for Bengaluru Metro's Purple Line is set to arrive at the Peenya depot by January 10. The new trains are expected to bring relief to commuters who face delays and congestion. The prototype will be assembled at the Peenya depot. Despite being equipped with distance-to-go (DTG) technology, the new trains will undergo rigorous testing before being deployed on the main tracks. Initial trials will be conducted during nighttime, followed by inspection and approval by the Research Design and Standards Organization (RDSO). Only after RDSO clearance, will the trains commence operations.

Expansion and shortages

Currently, Bengaluru Metro operates 77 km of tracks across the Purple (43.49 km) and Green (33.5 km) lines, supported by a fleet of 57 trains—33 for the Purple and 24 for the Green Line. Of these, 52 are used for daily commercial operations, with five reserved for maintenance. Additional trains were expected by 2021, but delays in procurement have caused disruptions.

2019 Agreement

In 2019, BMRCL signed an agreement with CRRC, a Chinese company, to procure 36 trains—21 for the Purple and Green lines and 15 for the upcoming Yellow Line. CRRC partnered with TRSSL, an Indian rail manufacturing company based in Kolkata, to supply the trains. Although the prototype train was scheduled to arrive in August 2023, it faced a five-month delay and will now arrive in January. As per the agreement, the remaining 20 trains will be delivered by TRSSL in phases and integrated into the metro system for both Green and Purple lines.

Train for Yellow Line

For the Yellow Line, TRSSL is set to deliver its second train, which will arrive at the Hebbagodi Metro Depot by January 15. In February 2024, the first driverless prototype train for this line was delivered from China, featuring CBTC (Communications-Based Train Control) technology. After receiving the third train, approvals from CMRS and the Railway Board will allow commercial operations with a frequency of one train every 13 minutes.

Although civil, electrical, and signaling works for the line have been completed, the delay in commercial services is due to a shortage of train sets. A BMRCL official said, "Initially, the line will operate with three trains running at intervals of 30 minutes. BMRCL plans to increase the number of trips once all train sets are delivered. By August 2025,

Titagarh is expected to supply a total of 15 six-coach trains. These additional trains will enable higher service frequency on the Yellow Line. The 18.82 km Yellow Line, running between RV Road and Bommasandra, has 16 stations. It features driverless trains and has received technical approvals for signaling, traction, and braking systems from the Railway Safety Board."

Fare revision

2025 may also see the Metro fare going up. For this purpose, BMRCL has set up a committee set up to revise metro fares and is expected to submit its report soon, which will determine the final fare structure. Currently, Namma Metro, spanning 76.95 km, charges a minimum fare of ₹10 and a maximum of ₹60. A 5% discount is offered on e-tickets and smart cards. The revised fare is expected to increase by 10-15%.

Okalipuram Corridor to open

The eight-lane signal-free corridor project at Okalipuram Junction, which has been under construction for nearly a decade, is set to open two additional lanes for public use by the end of February.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) began constructing the eight-lane signal-free corridor near Majestic in 2013-14. Currently, six lanes have been made operational, but work on two underpasses at the Chennai railway line remained incomplete. These underpasses are now nearly finished and are expected to be open for traffic by February's end.

Officials said that the new corridor will provide direct access for commuters traveling from Malleswaram and Rajajinagar to the railway station and from Majestic to platforms 6, 7, and 8 of the railway station. An official said, "The installation of precast boxes under the railway tracks was entrusted to the Railways, which has now completed the work. However, debris clearance at the construction site remains pending. Once the Railways hand over the site to the BBMP, the remaining work on drain installations and road connectivity will be completed."

The official added that the BBMP had allocated ₹80 crore to the Railways for installing a total of eight precast boxes beneath the Tumakuru and Chennai railway lines. Due to delays, costs have increased, and the Railways have requested an additional ₹7 crore from the BBMP. – **Sridhar Vivan**

Suburban rail project to pick pace

The long-delayed Bengaluru Suburban Railway Network is expected to see pick up pace in 2025, with officials hinting at the invitation of tenders this year for critical stretches.

An official said, "Key among these are the C1B corridor that connects Yelahanka to Devanahalli and includes a link to the airport, and the C3 corridor that spans from Kengeri to Whitefield." Officials dismissed rumours about the scrapping of the Kengeri-Whitefield corridor, stressing that the corridor's approval by the Union Cabinet, as outlined in the sanctioned DPR, ensures its implementation as an integral part of the project. "Plans for rolling stock procurement are also being revised. An earlier attempt to invite bids under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model did not materialise, prompting K-RIDE to shift towards direct procurement of rolling stock on an equity basis.

The state government has approved a 50:50 cost-sharing arrangement for this, and a decision from the Railway Board is expected soon. Corridors 2 and 4 of the suburban project, connecting Chikkabanavara to Benniganahalli and Heelalige to Rajankunte respectively, are slated for operations by December 2026, subject to the availability of rolling stock." **BMB**

Wishlist '25: Will Bengaluru get what it wants this year?

Civic leaders, activists put forth much-needed demands for well-governed, sustainable, better city, hoping authorities answer their call for change this new year

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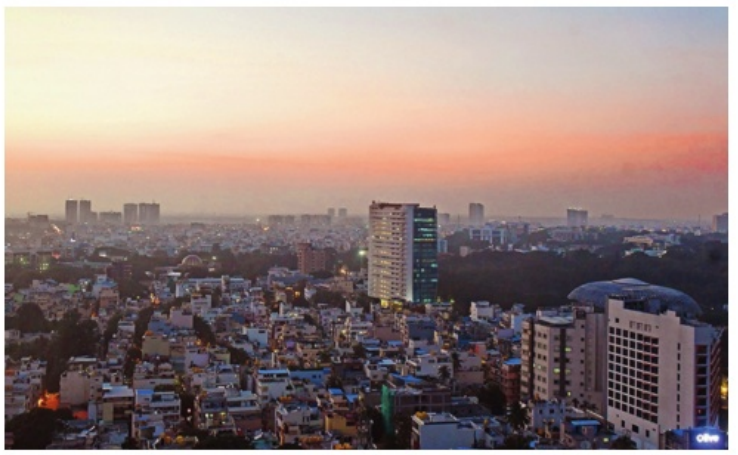
As Bengaluru steps into 2025, city activists and civic leaders are calling for significant changes to make the city more livable, sustainable, and well-governed. Their demands reflect years of frustration over unfulfilled promises and systemic inefficiencies, but they remain hopeful that the new year will bring actionable change.

Improved teamwork & infrastructure

Raghavendra Poojari HS, Program Head at B.PAC, highlighted the need for better coordination among government agencies. "Currently, there is a glaring lack of coordination between various government agencies, which is hampering effective governance. Passing the Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill is crucial to bring all parastatal agencies under one roof and ensure accountability," he said, stressing the urgency of holding the long-delayed BBMP elections. "The BBMP elections, delayed for four years, must be conducted by early 2025 without fail," he added.

Improved infrastructure remains a top priority for activists. Poojari called for the completion of critical projects such as the Hebbal flyover expansion, Okalipuram underpass, and Yelahanka flyover. "The Namma Metro Yellow Line between RV Road and Bommasandra, originally scheduled for 2024, should commence operations by early 2025. Civil work on the Pink Line must also be completed to expand the city's metro network," he urged. He also noted that traffic congestion, particularly in high-density areas like Goraguntepalya Junction, Silk Board, and Sarjapur Road, also demands immediate attention. "The state government must allocate a larger budget for city infrastructure to tackle these issues."


Final sunset of 2024 on Tuesday in Bengaluru

> **"BBMP elections must be held. Passing Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill is crucial to bring all parastatal agencies under one roof & ensure accountability**
> –Raghavendra Poojari HS, B.PAC

On monsoon preparedness, Vinod Jacob from Namma Bengaluru Foundation said desilting lakes, increasing their capacity, and cleaning stormwater drains to connect to lakes is essential to prevent flooding. Jacob further stressed the need for pothole-free streets, well-maintained footpaths, and efficient street lighting, not just in the Central Business District but across all major IT corridors. "Traffic solutions should prioritise public transport, like metro, electric buses, suburban rail, and last-mile connectivity," he said.

Citizen-centric urban development

Priya Chetty-Rajagopal, partner at Multiversal Advisory LLP, stressed the importance of inclusive urban planning. "Pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, including walkable roads, cycling lanes, and accessible public spaces, is vital. We also need to focus on human-animal coexistence," she said.

She called for stronger local governance through revived ward committees and transparent decision-making. "Online platforms for citizens to access and provide feedback on city plans and projects are critical. We also need regular public consultations and surveys to ensure citizen-centric development," she said, adding that prioritising both industrial growth and the common man's needs is key. "A revived heritage policy would preserve the city's unique identity," she added.

Sandeep Anirudhan, Convenor of Citizens' Agenda for Bengaluru, highlighted the failure to implement the Nagarpalika Act, passed in 1992, which could have transformed Bengaluru. "Years of 'lawlessness at the top' have doomed Bengaluru. The Nagarpalika Act (74th Amendment of Constitution) passed in 1992, would have ideally equipped Bengaluru for its unprecedented growth. It prescribed a planning authority, ground-up master planning, as well as an elected, devolved, decentralised, and unified city government. We had more than 3 decades to implement it; our city would have seen planned and systematic growth instead of the crowded, polluted, and crumbling slum that it has ended up as," he noted and called for implementing the Nagarpalika Act in letter and spirit and realigning Bengaluru on the path of becoming a planned city.

Catch these Sandalwood films in 2025

| Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
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Sandalwood fans can expect more entertainment in the year 2025. While recently released Kannada movies UI and Max brought cheers to the makers and fans, there is no dearth of big-ticket movies that are lined up for release in the year 2025.

If the progress of post-production works is any indication, it seems the pan-India movie '45' is expected to hit the silver screen shortly. Music director Arjun Janya makes his debut as a director with 45 starring Dr Shivarajkumar, Upendra, and Raj B Shetty, among others. Its audio rights were sold for an unspecified record amount recently.

'KD – The Devil,' starring Dhruva Sarja and Reeshma Nanaiah, is also expected to release not only in Karnataka but also across the country. Directed by Prem, who is known for sentiment, romance, and action movies, this film is bankrolled by KVN Productions. The talkie portion of the movie is completed, and picturisation of two songs is to be done.

Yash-starred 'Toxic,' directed by Geetu Mohandas, is expected to release either in April or May 2025. Recently, the movie was mired in controversy when Karnataka Forest Department filed a case for cutting trees during the shooting. This will be Yash's first movie to be released after a gap of three years.

Rakshit Shetty's latest movie, 'Richard Anthony: Lord of the Sea,' a prequel to Kannada movie Ulidavaru Kandanthe, is also expected to hit the silver screen in 2025. Satish Ninasam and Rachita Ram-starred 'Ayogya 2' is expected to release in Kannada, Tamil, and Telugu. Prakash Raj, Darling Krishna and Amrutha Iyengar's multilingual film 'Father' is also expected to be released shortly. Directed by Rajmohan, it is the first big-budget movie from R Chandru Studios.

Twin Tunnel project: BBMP to focus only on North-South Corridor for now

Despite concerns, there could be some headway on the first-of-its-kind tunnel project, at least on paper. Sources said that the implementation of the Bengaluru Twin Tunnel Road Project will initially focus only on the Hebbal-to-Silk Board North-South corridor, one of the two planned routes, as the state government has decided to secure loans exclusively for this segment at this stage. However, many activists have been saying that BBMP should prioritise fixing basic infrastructure rather than investing in huge cost projects.

Under the Tunnel Project, both the North-South and East-West corridors were planned to improve connectivity. However, in a recent development, BBMP has opted to prioritise the North-South corridor for the first phase of implementation. The financial bids invited on December 6 to raise Rs 19,000 crore for the entire project have been withdrawn.

A fresh bid specifically for raising funds for the North-South corridor is now open to banks and financial institutions willing to invest. "This phased approach allows the BBMP to prioritise resources and begin work on the North-South corridor while continuing to prepare the DPR for the East-West corridor, which connects KR Puram to Mysore Road," said an official.

The North-South corridor is estimated to require Rs 8,000 crore for land acquisition and construction. Financial institutions interested in investing in the North-South corridor have until January 3 to submit their loan proposals, including loan amounts and interest rates. Institutions must submit sealed bids by 4 PM on January 3.

The North-South twin tunnel road will stretch 18.5 km from Esteem Mall Junction in Hebbal to Silk Board Junction, featuring a three-lane, double-decker design. Officials said that the double-decker road will have three lanes on the lower deck and two on the upper deck, facilitating unidirectional traffic. Vehicles using the tunnel will be subject to toll fees, and the maximum speed is expected to be 35–40 km/h. **–Sridhar Vivan**

BDA plans to develop 6 more layouts in PRR-2 project

The Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) has announced plans to develop six new layouts as part of the Peripheral Ring Road-2 (PRR-2) project. To achieve this, the BDA is preparing to acquire land from various villages in the region.

An official said, "For the proposed layouts aligned with the PRR-2 project, preliminary notifications for land acquisition are yet to be issued. The BDA has instructed teams, led by land acquisition officers, to identify suitable land in the villages, coordinate with engineers, and gather necessary details such as land ownership, plot dimensions, maps, and other records."

Approximately 3,000 hectares of government and private land will be acquired for the project, subject to ongoing surveys. BM Kaval, Gulikamale, Kaggalipura, OB Choodanahalli, Agara, Uttari, Devagere, Gudimavu, and Kambipura Gangasandra, among others, are identified for acquisition. "Farmers whose land is acquired will receive compensation under the 40:60 ratio model. According to this plan, 40% of the landowners' compensation will be provided as developed plots in the new layouts created by BDA. As per BDA rules, landowners will be allotted plots in the same layout. The pricing for these plots will be determined after the development is completed. BDA is targeting the creation of 50,000 new sites to meet the high demand for residential plots. The success of this initiative is expected to enhance urban infrastructure and provide a boost to Bengaluru's real estate market," an official added. **–BMB**

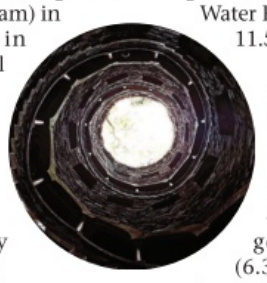
At 200%, we are in too deep

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

extraction in Bengaluru rural is more than 147%, it is nearing 200% in the case of Bengaluru urban district, leading to zero net groundwater availability for future use.

Hit rock bottom

The annual groundwater extraction in urban areas of Bengaluru is twice more than the amount extracted in Bengaluru rural. The current annual groundwater extraction in Bengaluru urban is 53,332.51 hectare metre (ham) in comparison to 23,164.46ham in Bengaluru rural. However, the total recharge-worthy area in the city is lesser. While the urban region has a total recharge-worthy area of 2,130.26 sq km, it is 2,236.51sq km in rural Bengaluru.



The majority of this water is being used for irrigation, followed by industrial and then domestic usage.

Poor quality

Some of the ground water samples from rural districts also had fluoride and nitrate contamination, above permissible levels.

Fluoride content was found to be as high as 1.9mg/L in samples collected from Avanthi, whereas high nitrate levels (as high as 400) were recorded in samples collected from Gangenapura, Kodagurki Avathi, Vishwanathpura, Bairasandra, Siddanaikanahalli.

According to the Indian standards of drinking water specifications, the acceptable limit of fluoride is 1mg/L and the permissible limit is 1.5mg/L. Similarly, the acceptable limit of nitrate is 45mg/L.

Extraction goes up in Karnataka

In Karnataka, while the total annual groundwater extraction is less than 70% of the available resources, overall extraction has increased from 66.26 % in 2023 to 68.44 % in 2024. There is a marginal increase in the Current Annual Ground Water Extraction for all uses from 11.32 to 11.55bcm during this period.

The annual ground water recharge in the state has been assessed as 18.74 bcm and the present annual extraction is 11.55bcm. The report analysed 237 assessment units, out of which 45 units (18.99 %) have been categorized as 'over exploited', 15 (6.33%) as 'critical', 33 (13.92 %) as 'semi-critical', and 144 units (60.76 %) have been categorized as 'safe'.

Similarly, out of 1,70,730.92 sq km recharge-worthy area of the state, 35,255.08 sq km (20.7%) area is 'over-exploited', 12,357.11 sq km (7.2 %) is 'critical', 23,383.92 sq km (13.7 %) is 'semi-critical' and 99,734.80 sq km (58.4%) is categorised as 'safe'.

As compared to the 2023 assessment, there is a decrease in annual ground water recharge from 18.93 bcm to 18.74 bcm and annual extractable resources from 17.08 bcm to 16.88 bcm.

Bitter pill: Expired drugs, lesser shelf life

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

factory inspection, the bid shall be disqualified. The factory inspection report in respect of the selected bidders was not forthcoming from the records," the CAG report read.

It is said the state government stated that the purchase order was issued before the blacklisting date and since there was huge demand for hand sanitiser during Covid pandemic, the supply was accepted.

"The reply is not acceptable as no relaxations were provided to the stipulated conditions in the tender document," the CAG report read.

Delay in supply of drugs

The CAG report found the delay in supply of drugs to warehouses ranging from one day to more than 180 days.

It said that the state government has stated that a penalty would be imposed on the bill amount for the delay in supplying drugs as per the guidelines.

Drugs with lesser shelf life

The tender conditions stipulate that all drugs should arrive at the District Warehouses (DWs) with a remaining shelf life of at least 80% of the total stipulated shelf life of the product, failing which the drugs would be rejected.

The CAG audit found that the DWs had accepted drugs worth Rs 143.90 crore with a shelf life of less than that during the period 2016-17 to 2021-22. The CAG audit observed that the drugs worth Rs 23.72 crore had a shelf life of 60% or less.

"Though the DWs had immediately distributed these drugs to the hospitals, the controls to ensure supply of drugs with sufficient shelf life were ineffective. Moreover, there was no feedback on timely utilization of drugs with very narrow shelf life by various hospitals except on their expiry," the CAG audit read.

Non-disposal of expired drugs

Schedule I of Biomedical Waste Management Rules, 2016, stipulate that expired cytotoxic drugs and items contaminated with cytotoxic drugs are to be returned back to the manufacturer/supplier or to the common bio-medical waste treatment facility or hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facility for incineration.

The CAG audit observed that expired drugs worth Rs 23.03 crore for the period 2019-22 were lying at 27 District Warehouses in the state without disposal. "The expired drugs were kept along with other regular drugs and medicines and exposed the risk of issuing these drugs inadvertently to various hospitals besides creating storage constraints," the CAG audit read.

The CAG audit also found that 59% of 75 essential drugs were consumed before receipt of the test results.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I Shruthi Damodhara W/O Damodar Ambar R/O 1640 Bda 3 Block Smv L/O Post Ullal Bangalore Changed Name As Shruthi Damodar

I, NILESH KONGETTIRA APPANNA R/at No.517 B3, Malaprabha, National Games Housing Complex, Koramangala, Bengaluru-560047 have changed my Minor Daughter Name from SAMAARA CHONDAMMA MADAPPA KONGETTIRA to SAMAARA MADAPPA KONGETTIRA vide affidavit dated: 24/12/2024 Before Notary K.V.Mani Bangalore.

I, UMANGI KRUNAL DHAKAN W/O Krunal Narendrakumar Dhakan R/o B-1019 Opulent SRC Bluebells, Meenakshi layout, Kamasandra Village Road, Ananthnagar, E City Ph-2, Bangalore-560100. I have changed my name to UMANGI BHARATKUMAR MISTRY vide affidavit dated: 30/12/2024 Before Notary B M Chandrashekar Bangalore

I, Akshay Mohan S/o H.R. Mohan Kumar, R/o No. 308/B, Eesha Nilaya, 12th Cross, loop Road, Ideal Homes township, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bangalore-560098 I have changed my name from Akshay Hadya MohanKumar to Akshay Mohan vide affidavit no IN-KA07767600840598W dated 30.12.2024 for all the purpose

I, CHANDAN BABU G N, Father of HANVIKA G C, residing at Goni Village, Dubbegatta Hobli, Tavarekere Taluk, Tumkur, Karnataka - 572123, have changed my minor daughter's name to AADHYA CHANDAN, vide affidavit dated 31/12 /2024, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, P VIJAYA KUMAR S/o Shiva Kumar R/o No 43 Sai Sankalp Sapthagiri Residency 5th Cross 1st Main Mysore Road Bengaluru-560059 I have changed my name to P VIJAY KUMAR vide affidavit dated: 21/12/2024 Before Notary B M Chandrashekar Bangalore

I, ISSAC ABRAHAM s/o Abraham R R/a No 04, 1st Cross,Church Street, Kathanur, Bengaluru-560077. I have changed my name ISAAC ABRAHAM. Vide Affidavit dated on 2/12/2024 Sworn Before Notary Kodi Nagappaya Bangalore

I, SRISHTI W/O SASHANK SEKHAR CHOUDHARY Resident E-1202 12th Floor Durga Petals Doddanekkundi Bengaluru-560037. I have changed my name to SRISHTI CHOUDHARY vide affidavit dated: 21/12/2024 Before Notary B M Chandrashekar Bangalore.

I, Jesintha Jayanandham w/o Sathiskumar Raja R/o No 15, Sree Lakshmi Nilayam Om Shakhi Street, Near Mary Statue Udayanagar, Bengaluru,-560016 have changed my name to Jesintha Jayanandam for all Purposes.

I, Aadyasha d/o Prakash Ramchandra Rao, r/o 203, Prime HBR 100, 1st Cross 1st Block, HBR LAYOUT, Bangalore-560043, have changed my name to Aadyasha Prakash Rao for all future purposes.

I Jyothi C Reddy R/o Kaveri - nagar, Hebbal 2nd cross, Near RK palace,RT nagar, Bengaluru 560032 have changed my name to Jothy Chinnaswamy Reddy Affidavit Dt.31/12/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, M.Mallikarjuna Raju S/o Bhaktavatsala Raju R/o # 107, 2nd Cross, Nagappa Block, Gayathri Nagar, B'lore-560021. I have changed my Name to Mallikarjuna Rajuu for all purposes.

I, Abdul Rehman Mohammed Ali Mulla S/o Mohammed Ali Mulla R/o 1110, 3rd Flr,19th A Main,3rd Cross, Jp Nagar 2nd Phase, B'luru, 560078 have changed my name to Abdul Rehman Mulla for all purposes.

I Mubeena D/O, Iqbal R/o No 144 2nd Main Mubarak Road M S Palya Vidyaranyapura Bangalore have changed my name to Mubin Taj.

I, Naugul Misba W/o Parveez Ahmed R/o 7, M M layout Chikkasandra Chikkabanavara B'lore-560090 have changed my name to Naugul Misbah.

I, GOVARDHANA GIRI G s/o GOVINDU G K R/a No 31, Pappana Layout, Kalkere, Main Road, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bengaluru-560016 I have changed my name to GOVARDHAN GOVINDU Vide Affidavit dated on 23/12/2024 Sworn Before Notary Kodi Nagappaya Bangalore

I, Yashna Galada Ajay Kumar Galada D/o Ajay Kumar Galada R/o #101 Floor No-51 Prosper Park Apartment Basavangudi B'lore-560004 have changed my name to Yashna Galada

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Looking back & loooking ahead

A look at social media posts to how film stars feel about 2024-25

Scouring social media as the year comes to an end is a joy. We find various life tips and nuggets on celebrity social media handles. Take a look...
-Agencies

Shanaya: Can't wait for 2025

On Monday, the budding actress shared a heartwarming video on Instagram, reflecting on her cherished memories from 2024. The compilation featured special moments from both her personal and professional life, giving her followers a glimpse into her year.

Shanaya, the daughter of Sanjay and Maheep Kapoor, is seen enjoying quality time with her friends and family throughout the clip. She also added the trending Northern Lights song to the video, creating a nostalgic and upbeat vibe.

Kajol: Firm resolve

Kajol shared that she was fabulous last year and will be even more fabulous in the coming year.

On Monday, the actress posted stunning photos of herself slaying in a saree, which she paired with statement earrings and jewellery. In the photos, Kajol can be seen flaunting her radiant smile as she poses for the cameras.

Alongside the pictures, she wrote, "None of this new year new me s&*^! I was fabulous last year and I will be even more fabulous next year as well #somoteitbe #asitis."

Previously, the 'Dilwale' actress had posted a candid selfie with the caption, "Just me, being the main character as always #selfietime."

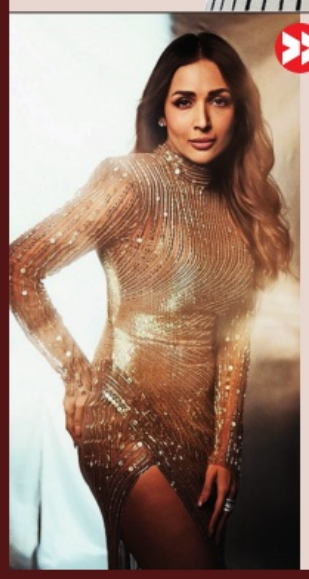
Mrunal: Bye December

Mrunal Thakur recently treated her fans to a glimpse of her December adventures through a series of special posts on her social media.

On Monday, the 'Sita Ramam' actress shared heartwarming photos and videos that captured memorable moments from the month, offering fans a peek into her life. In a collection of Instagram posts, Mrunal presented a visual diary of her December, featuring everything from festive celebrations to cozy moments spent with her loved ones, along with her cherished memories.

One of the standout moments included a photo of Mrunal enjoying the holiday spirit with friends, surrounded by sparkling Christmas decorations. She also posted a candid snap of herself enjoying a peaceful day in nature.

Malaika: Lessons of 2024



Malaika Arora recently opened up about the lessons she has learned in 2024, particularly the importance of trusting herself more following her separation from Arjun Kapoor.

In a social media post, the actress reflected on the challenges and growth she has experienced over the past year. Malaika shared her agreement with a post stating that 2024 has been a year of self-discovery and empowerment, teaching her to lean into her own strength and trust her instincts.

On Monday, Arora took to her Instagram and reshared a note reflecting on her 2024 journey. The note came just days after she responded to her ex, Arjun Kapoor's public comment about being "single."

The note read, "I don't hate you, 2024, but you were a difficult year, full of challenges, changes, and learning. You showed me that life can change in the blink of an eye and taught me to trust myself more. But, above all, you made me understand that my health—whether physical, emotional, or mental—is what really matters. There are things I still can't understand, but I believe that with time, I will understand the reasons and purposes of everything that happened."

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Wearer of many hats

Durgaprasad is debuting as a hero, director and producer in Sandalwood with Kudla Namdu Ooru. He has also bankrolled the film in association with Arya DK.

Durgaprasad said that he left home after quarrelling with his mother and came to Bengaluru to meet his favourite actor Sudeep.

"I have been a hard-core fan of Sudeep since childhood. My passion towards movies made me come to Bengaluru from Kudla in Dakshina Kannada a few years ago. I decided to work at Sudeep's house as a sweeper and act in movies, but circumstances made me go back to my hometown. After getting basic training in acting, I decided to act in Kudla Namdu Ooru. I wrote the script and dialogues and also directed it," said Durgaprasad.

He said that he worked as an interior designer for a living before this. "Many local artists have acted in the movie. We have released the movie's trailer and audio recently," he said.

The movie also features Ramesh, Prakash Tumminad, Swaraj Shetty, Shreya Shetty, Anika Shetty and others. The movie is set to arrive in theatres either in January or February.

Salute Vishnuvardhan

Thousands of fans of Dr Vishnuvardhan organised welfare programmes on December 30, the death anniversary of Sahasa Simha Dr Vishnuvardhan. Fans made Simhada Haadi, a tele film, on the occasion, under the GK Cinefiles Productions banner. GK Shashiraj Dorai has bankrolled the tele film.

A function was organised to pay tributes to Dr Vishnuvardhan. Veteran directors SV Rajendra Singh Babu, Joe Simon, Kannada Film Chamber of Commerce president Krishne Gowda, Kannada Film Producers' Association president Umesh Banakar, veteran actress Lakshmi Devi, and MLC Veeraiah and others paid tributes to Dr Vishnuvardhan.

Director Shashiraj Dorai said the tele film was based on four persons who are leading their lives with Dr Vishnuvardhan as their inspiration. "I thank Dr Vishnuvardhan's fans for their cooperation and help during the shooting of this tele film," the director said. He said that he wanted to pay tributes to the star with this tele film.

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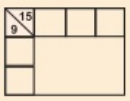
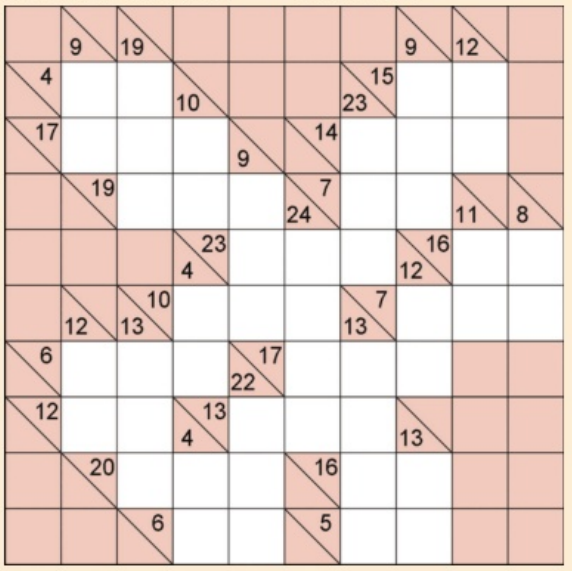
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

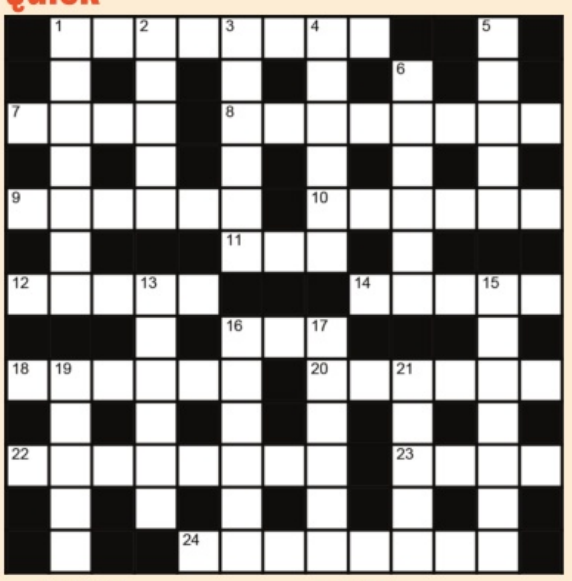


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Tots (8)
7 Middle Eastern restaurant on Coles Road (4)
8 Abbreviated, brief or terse (8)
9 In ___ / all in one voice or all together (6)
10 Buoyant (6)
11 Empty space (3)
12 Lay out (5)
14 Court order (5)
16 Brother of Kush (3)
18 The Creator in Hindu mythology (6)
20 Lets in (6)
22 God ___ ___ / reply to a sneeze, you will agree? (5,3)
23 Linguist Chomsky (4)
24 Musical sign of suspense (4,4)

DOWN

1 Gym shoe (7)
2 Cleans house (5)
3 Getting beaten (6)
4 Get back (6)
5 Stretchy synthetic fabric (5)
6 Was not truthful–the American way? (6)
13 Appalled (6)
15 Jeer or boo (7)
16 Attorney (6)
17 There's nothing in it (6)
19 Transmit or broadcast (5)
21 Tropical fruit (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: B EQUALS T

CUP AG BYO CVGB APBODDA–KOPB VQ BYO UPACUDG–UPI BYO CVGB GADDF.

Linemaro

My friends bet I can't talk to the prettiest girl. Wanna use their money to buy drinks?

Mindchow

People are known by the company they keep. Companies are known by the people they keep

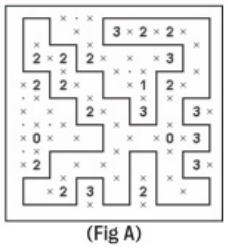
Joke of the day

David Hasselhoff to his agent: Henceforth, I just want to be known as The Hoff.
Agent: Sure, no hassle

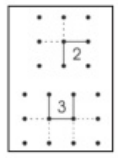
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

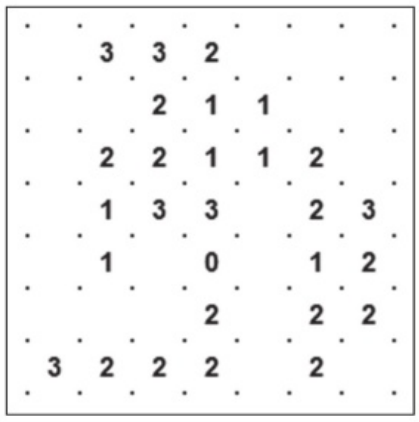


(Fig B) Not Allowed

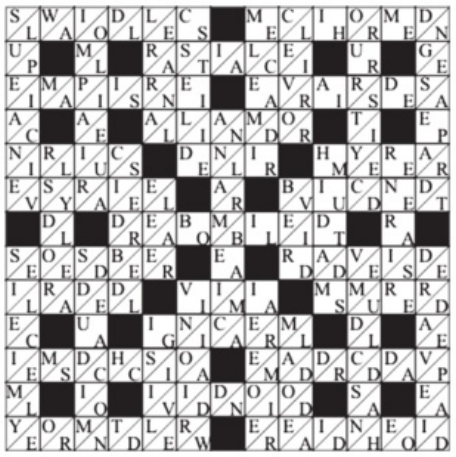
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



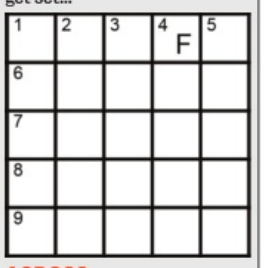
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

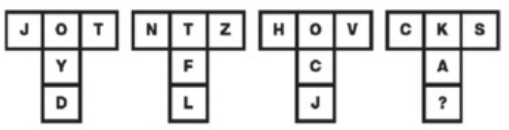
1 Hafts; 6 Holla; 7 Align; 8 In keg; 9 Spunk

DOWN

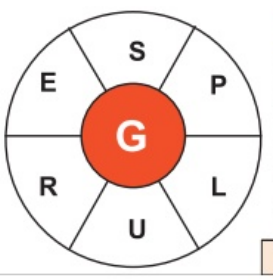
1 Helps; 2 Auk hi; 3 Ligan; 4 Lank F; 5 Got Sn

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

06 Average; 07 Good; 09 Outstanding

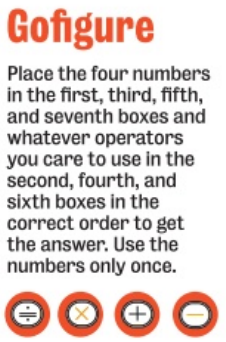
SudokuChallenge

5						4		
	4		7					
	6			3	9		1	2
4	8	7					9	
	3			7			5	
	5					7	8	4
9	7		2	1			6	
					6		4	
		6						8

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy = 8

1 6 7 8

Medium = 9

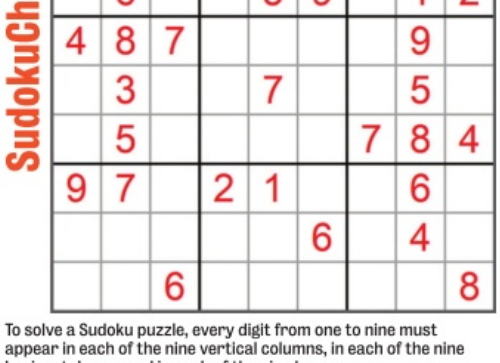
2 3 5 8

Hard = 25

2 5 5 3

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



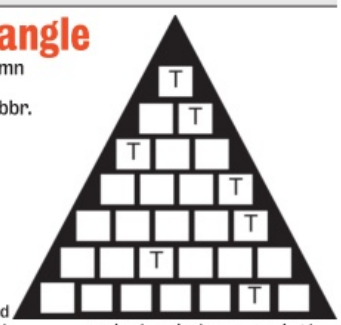
Differences: 1. Leg is moved. 2. Tie is different. 3. Hand is moved. 4. Hair is different. 5. Jacket is longer. 6. Arrow is longer.

Riddler

What is the only word in the English dictionary that has a silent z?

Alpha triangle

1 First part of column
2 Near to
3 Profs' helpers/ abbr.
4 Throw
5 Seashore
6 Performers
7 Prances

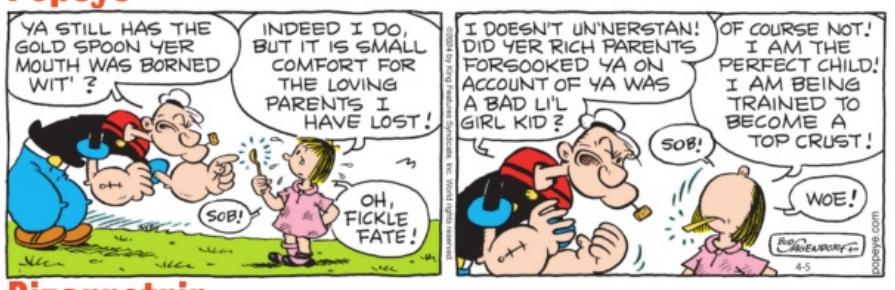


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


YA STILL HAS THE GOLD SPOON YER MOUTH WAS BORNED WIT' ?
INDEED I DO, BUT IT IS SMALL COMFORT FOR THE LOVING PARENTS I HAVE LOST!
SOB!
OH, FICKLE FATE!
I DOESN'T UN'NERSTAN! DID YER RICH PARENTS FORSOOKED YA ON ACCOUNT OF YA WAS A BAD LI'L GIRL KID ?
OF COURSE NOT! I AM THE PERFECT CHILD! I AM BEING TRAINED TO BECOME A TOP CRUST!
SOB!
WOE!
BOB CHINNERY
4-5
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

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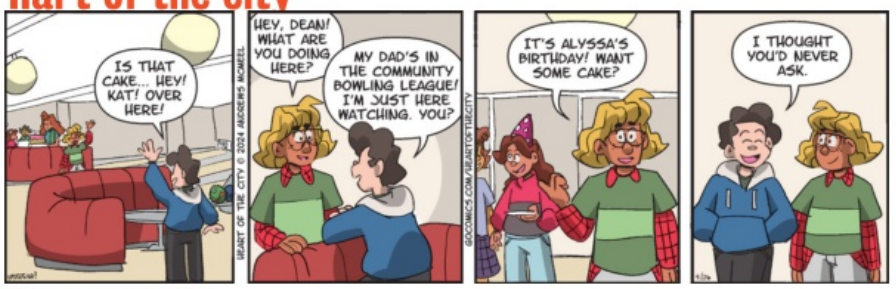
Yes, "childlike" can be endearing; "childish" is just unnerving.
Wayno & PIRARO 9·26·24
Dist. by King Features
BIZARRO.COM

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city


IS THAT CAKE... HEY! KAT! OVER HERE!
HEY, DEAN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
MY DAD'S IN THE COMMUNITY BOWLING LEAGUE! I'M JUST HERE WATCHING. YOU?
IT'S ALYSSA'S BIRTHDAY! WANT SOME CAKE?
I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2024 ANDREWS MCMEEL
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Crankshaft

WHEN... IN.... ROME.... DO.... AS.... THE..... ROMANS... DO!
READING LESSONS
9-26
ANY QUESTIONS?
YEAH... WHAT DO THE ROMANS DO?
I REALIZED I HAD A LOT OF CATCHING UP TO DO!
tombatiuk.com/books
BATIUK & DAVIS
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Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may feel happier and more energised, with internal vitality boosting your self-confidence. You are advised not to delay decisions regarding finances, profession, or academics. There could be moments where you may face self-respect issues with your spouse, but patience will help maintain domestic harmony. Lovebirds may plan short trips.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today is not a good day for you. You may feel dull and dissatisfied, possibly becoming a victim of conspiracies. You are advised to be cautious with hidden enemies and opponents. It is better that you avoid harsh speech, as it could lead to litigation. It's advised not to make investments in risky assets today.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, you may feel happy and enthusiastic. You might start a new partnership that could help grow your business. Your dedication will be appreciated by your seniors, and a promotion may be on the horizon. Job seekers may land a new job. Singles might find their soulmate with the help of relatives.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may be busy at work. Your focus will be tested multiple times, but patience will help you achieve your goals on time. Your hard work may bring rewards. You may also plan to invest in fixed assets.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Your destiny may favour you today, bringing success in an easy way. You may visit a religious place to find peace of mind and spend time gaining intellectual or occult knowledge. Students may excel in academics. Singles are likely to find a good match, and lovebirds may make important decisions regarding marriage.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you may feel dull. Be cautious of your opponents and rivals. You are advised to avoid arguments with your seniors and postpone any investments in fixed assets, as they might turn into dead investments. Lovebirds are advised to avoid discussions on unnecessary topics to maintain relationship harmony.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may enjoy quality time with your family and spend romantic moments with your spouse, which will boost your understanding. You may spend money on buying artefacts or household items to renovate your house. Be careful when making investments in fixed assets and read documents thoroughly before proceeding.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
You may feel happy and energetic today. Self-exploration may boost your confidence, making you fearless and courageous to face any challenges. However, it's important to be patient when making financial decisions for your business. Lovebirds will enjoy their happy moments. Students will have a good focus on their studies.

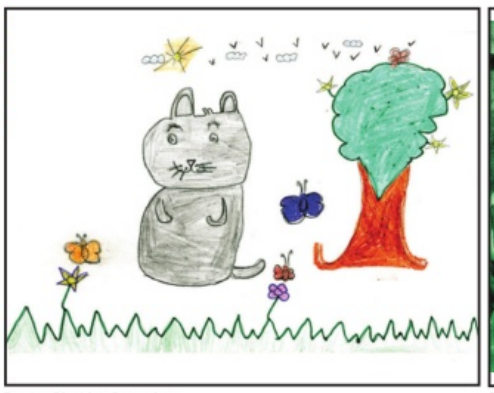
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today is a good day for you. Your enthusiasm may be at its peak, but it's important to regulate it. Self-analysis will give you confidence and increase your prestige in society. You will resolve many problems using your communication skills. Investors should avoid speculation and think carefully before investing. You may also consider higher studies for a better career.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you may not enjoy your work or family life. Avoid arrogance and ego with your spouse, as it could affect your emotional connection. Any partnership problems are likely to be resolved. Singles should take their time before making marriage-related decisions. Patience will help you overcome any messy situations.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
You are blessed by the moon today; you may feel enthusiastic. You might start new innovations in your business, which will lead to growth. You may plan renovations in your house and office using your creativity. Your network may become stronger.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today is a good day. You may be busy with family matters and receive good news from family members. You'll likely focus on your kids' academics and health, which should be under control. It is advised to be polite with those around you, as any harsh arguments could create problems.

KIDZONE



Ramya Murthy, Bengaluru

Saanair Patnaik Bengaluru

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
= 30÷(5+1)¹⁻¹
= 30÷6¹⁻¹
= 5⁻¹ = 4

RIDDLER The word rendezvous. Even though it's a French word, it's in the English dictionary and is pronounced [rahn-duh-voo].

QUOTE UNCODE Man is the most intelligent of the animals - and the most silly.

BULL'S EYE
glue, gruel, gulp, plug, purge, slug, SPLURGE, surge, urge

FAST FIVE

S	H	A	F	T
E	K	I	N	G
L	I	G	A	N
H	A	L	L	O
P	U	N	K	S

STRIKE OUT

S	W	I	L	L	S	E
P	M	A	T	A	L	E
E	M	P	I	R	E	R
C	A	L	M	O	T	R
I	R	I	S	E	L	I
E	Y	R	I	E	A	B
D	D	A	B	B	L	E
S	E	D	E	R	A	D
I	R	E	D	I	M	A
C	A	G	N	A	R	L
I	S	C	H	I	A	M
L	O	V	I	N	O	D
Y	O	N	D	E	R	R

QUICK

Y		D	R	U	M	R
A	T	E	U	G	L	
B	L	E	S	S	Y	O
E	A	W	C	A	C	
B	R	A	H	M	A	D
		G	L	U	V	A
A	R	R	A	Y	E	D
E		G	A	P	E	
U	N	I	S	O	N	U
Z	A	K	S	S	U	C
R	U	O	E	F	Y	
T	O	D	O	L	E	R

MENSA PUZZLE
I. Start on the upper left of each diagram, and move to the right, then down the alphabetical order, in steps of 5 for the left hand diagram, 6 for the next, then 7, then 8.

SUDOKU

5	9	3	1	8	2	4	7	6
1	4	2	7	6	5	8	3	9
7	6	8	4	3	9	5	1	2
4	8	7	6	5	1	2	9	3
2	3	9	8	7	4	6	5	1
6	5	1	9	2	3	7	8	4
9	7	4	2	1	8	3	6	5
8	2	5	3	9	6	1	4	7
3	1	6	5	4	7	9	2	8

ALPHA TRIANGLE
T, At, TAs, Cast, Coast, Actors, Cavorts.

GO FIGURE
Easy
8 + 7 − 6 − 1 = 8
Medium
5 × 3 + 2 − 8 = 9
Hard
5 × 3 × 2 − 5 = 25

LOOP

KAKURO

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